

WILKINSBURG BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING
Council Legislative Session
April 8, 2015

CALL TO ORDER

President McCarthy-Johnson called the meeting to order at approximately p.m. in Council Chambers, second floor of the Municipal Building, 605 Ross Avenue, Wilkinsburg, PA 15221.

ROLL CALL

The roll was called to establish a quorum. Present were Mr. Lefebvre, Ms. Garrett, Mr. Taiani, Ms. Trice, Ms. Moore, Ms. Grannemann, Mr. Shattuck, and President McCarthy-Johnson. Mayor John Thompson, Acting-Borough Manager, Amanda Ford and Solicitor Mike Witherel were also present. Ms. Macklin was absent. A quorum was established.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The pledge of allegiance, was led by President, McCarthy-Johnson and a moment of silence was observed to remember victims of violent crimes.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None at this time.

PRESENTATION

South Avenue/Wood Street Greenspace – Carla Lukehart – Penn State Center

Ms. Lukehart's assistant from Penn State Center presented a brief history of the project. Wilkinsburg was chosen to participate in the Penn State University Landscape Architecture Program Pittsburgh Studio Project in 2011. One of the student's conceptual design was chosen by the WCDC. Ms. Lukehart explained to Council the renovations. A design that was used last summer at the charrette was presented and revised to include the original design and thoughts from the community. The greenspace located at the intersection of South Avenue and Wood Street was designated as a gateway to the Wilkinsburg Business District. A walkway was constructed of permeable concrete from the southeast corner to the northwest to create a more open space for visibility into the sight and for safety concerns. A lawn area is proposed for a children play area and for people to sit and eat. Ms. Lukehart explained to Council the types of trees, perennials and shrubbery planted at the site. Site furnishings used are recommended from Victor Stanley and a description was provided of chess tables included in the design for the site. She also described use of a pervious sidewalk to help with storm water management. Phase I of the project will begin in the summer of 2015, Phase II will begin in the fall of 2015. Ms. Evans, Executive Director of WCDC talked about their investment in this project and willingness to assist. Mr. Taiani questioned possibility of adding 'blue lighting' to summons law enforcement

when needed. He asked about maintenance responsibility for shrubbery etc. and it was explained NMRWA and Wood Towers will share in the maintenance of the greenspace. There was discussion about maintenance of the Linear Park near the South Avenue and Wood Street location and in the surrounding area that is not being maintained. President McCarthy-Johnson responded by talking about the agreement to maintain the Linear Park with Port Authority and the other area that is not a Borough owned responsibility. Mayor Thompson expressed his belief an area such as the greenspace is a likely location where people will be willing to maintain as a nice place to sit, etc. Ms. Garrett expressed her agreement with Mayor Thompson and accepting the space as a main thoroughfare to the Business District and the restructuring.

Mr. Shattuck informed Council that Ferguson Playground is being well maintained and well utilized. Mayor Thompson expressed excitement about Wilkinsburg moving forward and making changes keeping with the times (i.e. population changes, decrease in the number of elementary schools, etc.). There was a question and answer session from the audience and Council members.

AGENDA ITEMS

1. Approving Council Meeting Minutes of 03/04/15, 03/11/2013 and 03/18/2015.

Moved: Ms. Garrett

Second: Mr. Lefebvre

All voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried.

Note: A roll call vote was recorded in the handwritten notes. The tape recording did not record a roll call vote.

Yes: Ms. Garrett, Ms. Trice, Ms. Moore, Mr. Taiani, Ms. Grannemann, Mr. Shattuck, Mr. Lefebvre, President McCarthy-Johnson

2. Approving March Checks Issued:

Regular Disbursements 03/01 – 03/31/15	\$ 568,123.50
Payroll Disbursements	285,778.31
Voided Checks	<u>(6,408.49)</u>
Total Disbursement	\$ 847,493.32

Moved: Mr. Lefebvre

Second: Ms. Moore

Yes: Ms. Garrett, Mr. Taiani, Ms. Moore, Ms. Grannemann, Mr. Shattuck, Mr. Lefebvre, President McCarthy-Johnson.

No: Ms. Trice

Motion carried 7:1

3. Approving Nine Mile Run Watershed Association – Replacement trees (2) along the sidewalk on Center Street adjacent to Ferguson Park.

Moved: Mr. Lefebvre

Second: Ms. Grannemann

All voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried.

Ms. Ford informed Council she received a call from Nine Mile Run who informed her the trees are replacements due to a motor vehicle accident.

4. Discussion regarding TIGER Discretionary Grants – Councilman Shattuck.

Mr. Shattuck talked about the train trestle study and discussion about \$10,000 that was not going to be spent to add to a grant. Mr. Shattuck wanted Council informed of the opportunity and reminded them of the short window for grant application. It is the consensus of Council for Councilman Shattuck to proceed.

5. Discussion regarding Street-Sweeper purchase.

Ms. Ford informed Council about the handout of recommendations of options. The new options as recommended by Mr. Egler is for leasing for a seven year period at 3.11%. Payment options recommended by Mr. Egler is for a payment from the General Fund with a possibility of a millage increase to help support that. Application for a floating bond late 2015 to carry the Borough to early 2016 was also recommended. Paying off the street sweeper would save the Borough \$26,000 in interest. Mr. Egler recommended with the payment through the capital fund, there would be a \$12,747 remaining balance to last until early 2016. Income from the library for reimbursement in the amount of \$16,610 in each year through the process of the community leasing agreement payment would help support purchase of the street sweeper and properly prepare for the 2016 into 2017 budget through the line item. Money could be saved by other cash flow revenue. Ms. Garrett questioned why there is a library reimbursement to the Borough. It was explained the Borough financed the purchase of Eastridge Library Branch by loan to the Library. Wilksburg Library reimburses the Borough in the amount of \$16,610.00 for ten years to repay the Borough. Floating a bond and the dollar amount will be discussed at the next Finance Committee Meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Lakisha Glover – 1503 North Ave. – Complained about deep pot holes at the top of North Ave. near Graham Field. Street lights are out and very dark at night at Diamond Way. Trash is being dumped in the abandoned structure. It is unsafe. Ms. Trice talked about Diamond Way and bags of trash, tires, etc. that she reported to the Code Enforcement Director. Siding is being ripped from abandoned structures. April 25, 2015 is the scheduled Community Clean-Up. Mr. Taiani commented the damage is too severe for volunteers to clean up. Clean-up of debris not the structure can be done by volunteers. A dumpster is being requested. Mayor Thompson commented it is important to call 911 when people are vandalizing abandoned structures while it is happening.

Tracey Evans – Wilkinsburg Community Development Corporation – 1001 Wood Street – Talked about the Norfolk Southern Agreement engineering study for conduit and lighting under the trestle. This is a second agreement and both the engineer and solicitor signatures are required for funding. Ms. Evans would like to meet prior to Council Meeting for the quarterly report. She will be available at 5:00 and asked for questions in advance. There was a request to receive a response from Council about the Penn State presentation. She informed Council about the Liquor Control Board Reform Referendum Public Meeting on April 22, 2015 at 6:30 p.m. that is open to the public. Ms. Evans asked for an R.S.V.P. to plan for a meeting relocation if necessary.

Jim Starr – Houston Starr Company- 300 Brushton Ave. – Presented pictures of a sinkhole twelve inches deep. President McCarthy-Johnson will report to Borough Engineer and DPW.

OLD BUSINESS

- Review of Talent Bank applications for approvals next week for the Zoning Hearing Board
 - There was discussion about review of applications
- Wilkinsburg Website Update and approval before presenting to public
- Code Director and Assistant Financial Director job posting.
 - Ms. Ford reported using the advertisement used in 2014 for Code Director and having the Asst. Financial Director posting done for advertisement. Advertisement in the Sunday edition being the highest circulation day is recommended.
- Borough Manager posting update
 - Ms. Ford reported having advertised for the Borough Manager position on the highest circulation day (Sunday).
- Berkheimer tax bills to homeowners (response from D. Egler)
 - Ms. Ford reported Mr. Egler did receive a response from Berkheimer. However he was not pleased with the information he discovered. He is waiting for information from a resident. Mr. Lefebvre talked about a change that tax bills are being sent to homeowners and not mortgage companies.
 - Mr. Witherel will check on this. If the mistake was made by Berkheimer, Council will hold them accountable.

NEW BUSINESS

Wilkinsburg named as a **2015 Banner Community** from Rich Fitzgerald Allegheny County Executive by Allegheny League of Municipalities (ALOM) for providing effective, efficient, and accountable services to residents and businesses and for demonstrating a commitment to training and education of its officials, active participation in professional organizations and in their Council of Governments, sponsorship of community events, and routine communication with residents.

President McCarthy-Johnson suggested for May, June, July and August Council meet twice during each of these months after April 15, 2015. Committees will meet as scheduled.

President McCarthy-Johnson reviewed the process to get information to Amanda J. Ford, Borough Manager. President McCarthy-Johnson read aloud from the E-Code Section 65-10 Employment Matters as a rule of Council. President McCarthy-Johnson asked that Council become cognizant of Ms. Ford's time and efforts as the Borough Manager.

There was an announcement for all residents of Allegheny County that East End Works is sponsoring a summer job fair for summer employment for ages 14 – 21 yrs. Friday April 10, 2015 at Carnegie Library E. Liberty 130 S. Whitfield Street summer Learn and Earn Employment Program.

There was a consensus of Council to proceed with the South Avenue/Wood Street Project expecting a final vote on the matter in May, 2015.

Mayor Thompson announced the Chaplains from the Sanctuary Project will hold a vigil for the Powell Family April 9, 2015 at 3:00 p.m. Ferguson Playground.

April 25, 2015 Spring Clean-Up 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Bags, vests and gloves will be distributed. Yard debris can be placed at curbside contained in a box or brown bag and DPW will collect the debris.

Ms. Moore announced the Wilkinsburg Police Department will be honored by Mt. Calvary Baptist Church on Swissvale Ave. at 2:00 p.m. on April 18, 2015.

April 23, 2015 Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra Concert at Wilkinsburg High School. Tickets are being sold.

ADJOURNMENT

Being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by President McCarthy-Johnson at approximately 8:45 p.m. into an Executive Session without expectation of any action being taken.

Vanessa McCarthy-Johnson
President Council